What is claimed is:

1   **1.** A method comprising:

2   receiving, at a data processing system, a requirement from a prospective purchaser for a first

3   chemical;

4   comparing, in said data processing system, said requirement to analyses of batches of said

5   first chemical that are available for purchase through said data processing system to identify a batch

6   that satisfies said requirement; and

7   outputting, from said data processing system, an indicium of said identified batch to said

8   prospective purchaser.

1   **2.** The method of claim 1 wherein said analyses are stored in an inventory database in said

2   data processing system.

1   **3.** The method of claim 1 further comprising obtaining said analyses from a testing facility

2   that tests samples of said batches in accordance with a uniform standard that is established for said

3   first chemical.

1   **4.** The method of claim 1 further comprising:

2   compiling statistics in said data processing system, said statistics comprising information

3   about purchases of said first chemical and purchases of other chemicals facilitated by said data

4   processing system; and

5   outputting said statistics to a statistics subscriber.

1   **5.** The method of claim 1 further comprising storing said requirement in a requirements

2   database.

1   **6.** The method of claim 2 further comprising:

2   updating said inventory database by obtaining further analyses of further batches of said first

3 chemical, wherein said further batches are analyzed in accordance with a uniform standard

4 established for said first chemical; and

5   inputting said further analyses into said inventory database.

1   **7.** The method of claim 6 further comprising:

2   updating said inventory database by obtaining analyses of batches of a second chemical,

3 wherein said batches are analyzed in accordance with a uniform standard established for said second

4 chemical; and

5   inputting said analyses of batches of said second chemical into said inventory database.

1   **8.** The method of claim 1 wherein said identified batch of said first chemical

2 is priced below a price at which said first chemical is normally sold.

1   **9.** A method comprising:

2   establishing a uniform standard for a chemical, the uniform standard including a

3 supplier-independent set of physical and chemical characteristics of said chemical;

4   analyzing, according to said uniform standard, a first sample of a batch of said chemical from

5 a first supplier and a second sample of a batch of said chemical from a second supplier; and

6   inputting analyses of said first sample and analyses of said second sample into a data

7 processing system.

1   **10.** The method of claim 9 further comprising storing said analyses of said first sample and

2 said analyses of said second sample in an inventory database.

1   **11.** The method of claim 9 further comprising receiving, at said data processing system, a

2 requirement from a prospective purchaser for said chemical.

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12. The method of claim 11 further comprising comparing, in said data processing system, said requirement to said analyses of said first sample and said second sample.

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13. The method of claim 12 further comprising determining, via said data processing system, if said analyses of said first sample and said second sample satisfy said requirement for said chemical.

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14. A method comprising:

outputting, from a data processing system, a uniform standard for a chemical, said uniform standard defined by a supplier-independent set of physical and chemical characteristics of said chemical; and

receiving, at said data processing system, a requirement from a prospective purchaser for said chemical, said requirement comprising an allowable range of values for at least some of said physical and chemical characteristics that define said uniform standard.

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15. The method of claim 14 further comprising storing said requirement in said data processing system.

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16. The method of claim 14 further comprising comparing, via said data processing system, said requirement to analyses of batches of said chemical that are available for purchase through said data processing system.

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17. The method of claim 16 further comprising outputting, from said data processing system, an indicium of a batch of said chemical that satisfies said requirement.

1   **18.** A method for selling a non-branded product, comprising:

2   analyzing, according to a uniform standard, a sample of a batch of a chemical

3 supplied by a first supplier;

4   inputting analyses of said sample into a data processing system; and

5   outputting, from said data processing system to a prospective purchaser, an indicium of said

6 batch if said analyses satisfies a requirement for said chemical established by said prospective

7 purchaser, wherein said indicium does not identify said batch by supplier, by brand name or other

8 identifying designation.

1   **19.** The method of claim 18 further comprising offering said batch for sale at a price that is

2 lower than an offering price of branded batches of said chemical of said first supplier.